

DC Gazette

VOL IX NR 10 25¢ AT NEWSSTANDS

December 1978



SMILES AT ELLEN'S IRISH PUB, now enjoying a 180-day stay of demolition. One of Dupont Circle's favorite walk-in therapy centers was threatened with destruction by the American Psychiatric Association, which felt an irresistible urge to put up a high-rise on the spot. The neighborhood is fighting back. As Freud said once, "Sometimes, when you feel people are out to get you, you're not paranoid. They are." (Photo by Leonard Cohen (c)1978)

The Visitors Center: Form Without a Function

AS WE WENT TO PRESS, the Community for Creative Non-Violence had received temporary permission from the Interior Department to use the National Visitors Center as an emergency night shelter. It was the first time since the bankruptcy of the Penn Central that anyone had come up with a useful purpose for the structure.

It is ironic that, in the midst of the debate over the convention center, a huge indoor space — about half the size of the proposed Astrodome, in fact — sits largely idle, the National Park Service's first man-made desert, a dreary wasteland that travelers must cross between the twin wonders of Metro and Amfleet. "It's like walking on the moon," a lonely park policeman said the other day as he patrolled his acres of carpeting.

Architecturally, it is a magnificent space. Even the barrenness can't conceal that. But despite the \$45 million spent in restoration, the audio-visual gadgetry and the hoopla attending its construction, visitors have found it more an obstacle than an attraction.

Now, with use only a fraction of the projections happily offered by planning consultants, the staff has been cut back from 55 to 15, large areas (including those containing some of the few seats) are regularly roped off and the escalators into the audio-visual pit have been shut down.

The National Visitors Center stands a lonely monument to the flim-flammy that accompanies grand public works schemes, the inaccuracy of consultants' projections, and the potential costs involved in making "no small plans."

Someone called us the other day with a radical suggestion. Why not use it as a convention center? In fact, no one has seriously studied the possibility. Convention site studies have considered building a monster structure next to the NVC, but never in it. It wouldn't, one suspects, be a big enough project with enough goodies for enough of the right people.

For ourselves, we would happily settle for a night shelter — or even, god forbid, a train station. If these seem too socially useful then perhaps we could have the world's largest indoor jogging track or, as we have previously suggested, a hall for state funerals in which the departed would lie in the audio-visual pit as biographical scenes were flashed on the multiple screens to the strains of "America the Beautiful."

But then maybe we should just leave it as it is, especially as long as we are still considering a convention center. For as it stands, it may just be the most important monument in town — unintentionally erected to commemorate our enormous capacity for self-deception.

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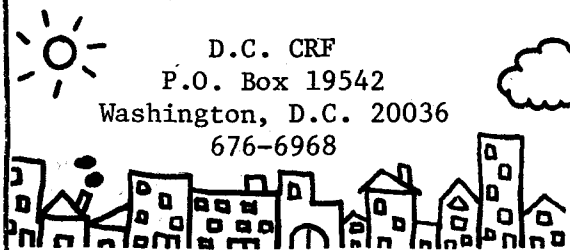
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DC GAZETTE

THE DC GAZETTE is published monthly except during the summer when it is published bimonthly. Our deadline is the second Tuesday of the month except for ads, which should be submitted by the third Tuesday of the month. The Gazette is a member of the Alternative Press Syndicate and uses the services of Liberation News Service, Pacific News Service, College Press Service, HerSay News Service, and Community Press Features. The Gazette is available by mail for \$5 a year. Single copies are 50¢ if mailed and 25¢ at selected newsstands.

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DC GAZETTE
1739 CONNECTICUT AVE. NW (#2)
DUPONT CIRCLE, DC 20009

232-5544



The wages of guilt

FIRST, the crime news. There was a hold-up recently at a local bank. Police and FBI agents roared up Connecticut Avenue but, like everyone else, got caught in a traffic jam. As they sat there, sirens blaring futilely, a fellow suddenly leaped out of a Pontiac and took off on foot. The agents and cops gave chase.

It was bad enough for him that he got caught but it was even worse when he found out that the posse wasn't after him at all. They didn't even know he had just held up a lone pedestrian some blocks away.

Which one's Zbig?

WHEN JIMMY CARTER CAME into office there were mentions, on these pages and elsewhere, of the quiet but significant influence of an outfit known as the Trilateral Commission. Now we think we've stumbled upon Barry's equivalent of the TC. It's the good old Metropolitan Planning and Housing Association. If you compare the past and present boards of MWPFA with Barry's transition task force, you'll find the following names in common: Marie Barksdale, Herb Franklin, Jim Gibson, Philip Hammer, Flaxie Pinkett, Ann Turpeau and Theresa Jones. Not to mention longtime MWPFAer Conrad Cafritz, who is in line to head the new housing finance agency, according to Ear.

AMY CARTER, of course, is no longer at Stevens School. That's not all that's no longer at Stevens School. The extended daycare program has been dropped as well. Sic transit gloria.

It isn't built yet

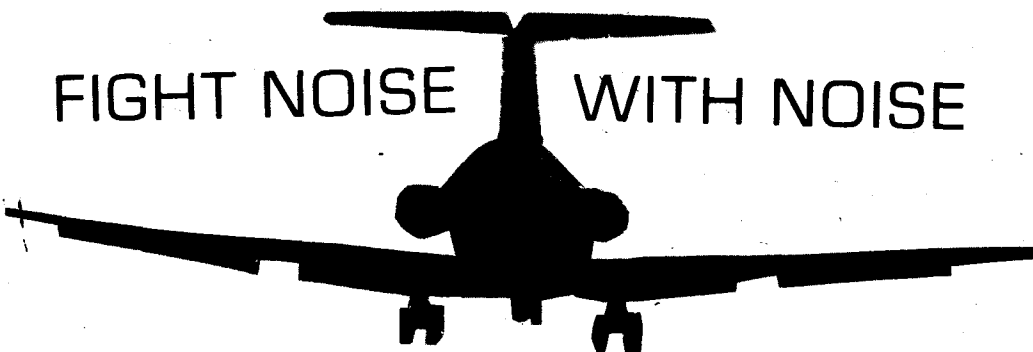
WE HATE TO differ with our journalistic betters but we would like to point out that the convention center is not built yet. You may have gotten the impression elsewhere that all that needs to be done is to pour the concrete and set up the booths, but, in fact, the anti-center referendum coalition has had little difficulty rounding up the necessary petitions to take the matter to the polls.

Although the city has failed to produce regulations governing the new initiative and referendum provisions of the charter, referendum backers believe the courts will support their contention that the charter is operative despite the lack of supporting regulations.

The support for a referendum poses a problem for mayor-elect Barry, who - like his Democratic opponents in the recent primary - went down the line for the center. The fight could cause the first real break between Barry and a substantial number of his backers. The fight also is a threat to would-be successors to Barry's at-large council seat, especially David Clarke, who also has supported construction of the center.

The anti-center forces, led by economist Jack Phelan, question the center's financing (why no pri-

FIGHT NOISE WITH NOISE



NOISE (Neighbors Opposed to Irritating Sound Emissions) is fighting to reduce aircraft noise at National Airport. Recently NOISE filed an opposition at the CAB objecting to an application to add more air traffic to National Airport. NOISE needs your support to fight the airlines and the FAA. Send your contributions to NOISE, c/o Joel Joseph, 1412 Foxhall Road, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007. Call 338-5560 for more information.

TO GET INVOLVED IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE CONVENTION CENTER YOU CAN CALL:

Ward	Coordinator	Phone
1	Harriet Hubbard	667-9271
	George Frain	387-3737
2	Marie Drissell	833-1634
3	Bert Anderson	363-7726
	Carol Gidley	244-1379
4	Dorothy Maulsby	526-5032
5	John Kelly	526-3426
	Angela Rooney	526-4592
6	Ed DeVaughn	543-5870
	Jack Phelan	543-6239
7	John Woodson	398-5001
	Jim Hannaham	582-5823
8	Wilbert Williams	562-4559

Thanks to Don't Tear It Down for this list.

vate contribution to costs?), its potential for attracting business (figures from other facilities around the country do not support the city's optimism) and the distorted priorities involved in making such a large capital commitment in this area. Senator Patrick Leahy, who finally gave reluctant acquiescence to the project, added at the time, "It is still my view that the proposal is marginal in an economic sense. If I were a citizen of the District of Columbia I would vote against it."

Now, if it could just tell us our correct water bill. . .

THE DEPARTMENT of Motor Vehicles has long been one of the best-run agencies in the city government, but now its efficiency is getting a little frightening. A friend reports that she took a driver's test the other day. From a computer. When it was all over, the machine, with more spirit than its human counterparts, flashed, "Congratulations. You got 100 percent right!" We are relieved to report that it did not, however, shake her hand.

Best of the future

LEST SOME OF OUR readers think that our piece on the Washingtonian last month was satirical, we would like to point out that our friends on L St. are planning for their January issue a report on "Everyday Life in 2001 A.D." The Washingtonian, having told us everything there is to know about our present

existence now prepares us for the future with the aid of an "on the scene" report by Vance Packard and interviews with Isaac Asimov and other noted futurists such as Richard Bolling and Stewart Udall.

Ed & Tandy & True & . . .

THE WASHINGTONIAN AND the Gazette, however, are not the only publications in town that give you the news that the Post and Star miss. Take Dossier, for example. In its October issue it reported, "Ed Dickinson, Tandy's ex, now married to lovely Linda, has purchased Tongsun's (Tandy's current) Woodlawn Drive Manse. Meanwhile, a few blocks away Jayne Coyne sold Tongsun's 32nd Street pad to Marshall Coyne, Jayne's ex. Observing this thoughtfully is True Davis, Ed Dickinson's immediate neighbor, and Ali Areza, the Saudi Arabian Ambassador, Marshall's immediate neighbor (if he lives there) whose countryman Akrumojeh bought Ed Dickinson's house in Marbella, then transferred the property to King Khaled's brother. . . and, in still another chapter Pete Williams and his pretty missus bought Ed Dickinson's old house on R Street. . . Question now is who bought Pete's house. . . it was not Collins Bird, but he did buy Tongsun's limo from the IRS."

Build and run

THE BECHTEL CORPORATION, which builds things — like Metro, the Alaska Pipeline and more nuclear plants than anyone else, takes care of itself rather well. Documents have recently surfaced in Oregon which reveal a secret agreement between Bechtel and the chairman of the board of the Portland Electric Company, the utility which operates the Trojan nuclear plant. According to Zodiac News Service, provisions of that agreement reportedly protect Bechtel from being liable for any losses or problems caused by engineer-design problems with the plant. The agreement was so secret that, until recently, the utility had been planning to sue Bechtel for \$20 million needed for replacement parts required because of alleged design errors. The utility's management apparently has not been aware that their own board chairman, Frank Warren, had signed the agreement with Bechtel.

According to one person who has seen the Bechtel agreement, Bechtel does not even provide standard guarantees "as simple as one can get on a toaster in a department store."

Progress

CONGRATULATIONS TO METRO on the open-

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THE NEWS BEFORE IT HAPPENS

For more than 12 years the Gazette has been bringing you the news *before* it happens: ideas and issues that are going to shape the future of the city but which the other media pass by because they are afraid of them or because they are not connected with trendy events. That's why, among the city's media, the Gazette was first to:

- PROPOSE BIKEWAYS FOR THE CITY (1968)
- PROPOSE NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS (1969)
- PRESENT THE CASE FOR DC STATEHOOD (1970)
- PROPOSE A SUNSHINE LAW (1971)
- REVEAL THE TRUE EXTENT OF METRO'S FINANCIAL MISMANAGEMENT (1971 on)
- PROPOSE THE REINTRODUCTION OF STREETCARS (1972)
- REVEAL MASSIVE INEQUITIES IN PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENTS (1973)
- RAISE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NATIONAL VISITORS CENTER BOONDOGGLE (1969 on)

The Gazette is the paper that first exposed the convention center scandal and helped defeat it the first time it went before Congress. . . that helped to kill an Urban Development Corporation scheme modelled on the now-bankrupt New York UDC. . . that was first to propose a speculation tax, property tax deferral, and homeowners' exemptions. . . that has been the leading voice in the media fighting against free-ways, real estate speculation, developer landgrabs and the severest journalistic critic of the city's urban removal policies and waste in city government.

FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING
TO YOUR CITY BEFORE IT'S TOO
LATE. You can use the form below:

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Please send me a year's trial subscription to
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NAME _____

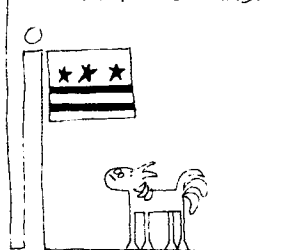
ADDRESS _____

ZIP _____

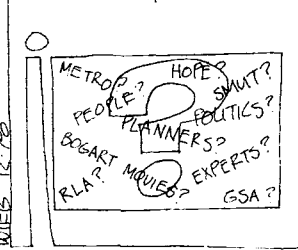
THIS HORSE IS THROUGH
WITH THE OLD
DISTRICT FLAG!



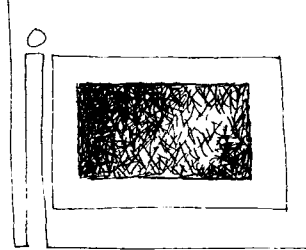
NO ONE WANTS TO SALUTE
THIS TIRE D SYMBOL OF
OUR DOMINATED PAST...



SO, WHAT IF WE ORDERED
A NEW FLAG—WHAT COULD
IT SYMBOLIZE, INSTEAD?



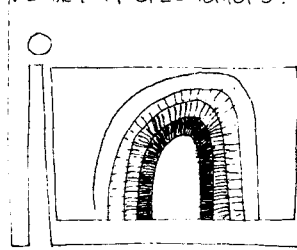
SHOULD WE MAKE IT 50% GRAY
TO HONOR THE 50% OF DOWNTOWN
TAKEN BY STREETS & ALLEYS?



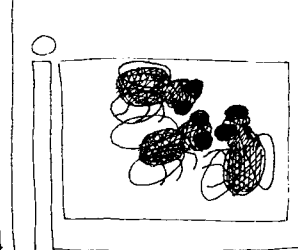
SHOULD THE FLAG NOTE THAT
THE LUNCH COUNTER AT
SCHWARTZ'S IS GONE?



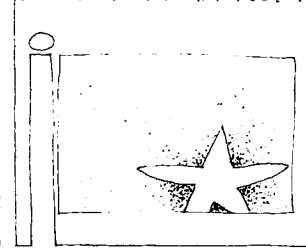
OR, SHOULD A RAINBOW STAND
FOR THE WE'LL ULTIMATELY
DELIVER UP SPECULATORS?



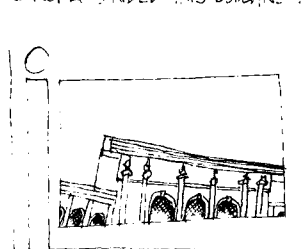
SHOULD ORDINARY HOUSE FLIES
HONOR THE WATERS OF
OUR ROCK CREEK?



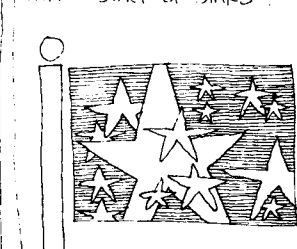
SHOULD A SINKING STAR NOTE
HOW THE REST OF THE NATION
ENCOURAGES OUR STATEHOOD?



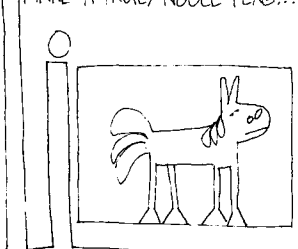
OR SHOULD UNION STATION DO
THE SINKING TO HONOR HOW
CONGRESS AIDED THIS BUILDING?



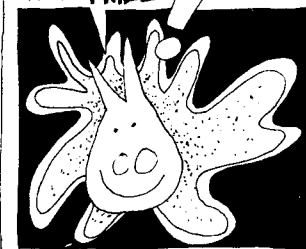
OR, SHOULDN'T WE NOTE THE
MILITARY'S POSSESSIONS HERE
WITH A STACK OF STARS?



BUT, THEN, I'M ONE OF THOSE
WHO THINK A HORSE WOULD
MAKE A TRULY NOBLE FLAG...



MAYBE YOU HAVE AN IDEA—
SEND IT IN—MAYBE I'LL GIVE
IT A PRIZE!



UNEXPECTED CONSERVATION EFFORTS by utility consumers this year may cause serious problems for the nation's electric companies, according to the Environmental Action Foundation. Citing industry figures, EAF notes that companies are now experiencing vast amounts of idle generating capacity. The group warns that the overestimate of power needs will probably result in substantially high electric bills as companies seek to recover lost revenues. It's all described in the November issue of EAF's 'Power Line,' available from EAF, 724 Dupont Circle Building, DC 20036 (202-659-1130)

YOUTH AND NATION is a socialist-Zionist quarterly published by the Hashomer Hatzair Youth Movement. Subscriptions are \$2 a year from Youth and Nation, 150 Fifth Ave, Room 709, NYC NY 10011.

INFLATION FIGHTING IDEAS is a new consumer publication from the US Office of Consumer Affairs. Hints and information on where to get more information. Write Consumer Information Center, Dept. 625 G., Pueblo, Colorado 81009, for a copy.

ALTERNATIVES is a voluntary simplicity news letter that discusses various aspects of VS and includes a resource list. Copies are available for \$1 from Alternatives, 1924 E. Third St., Bloomington, Ind. 47401.

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION: Proceedings of a national conference on the subject that attracted 500 people from 25 cities. Copies can be obtained for \$3.50 from the National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs, 1521 16th St. NW, DC 20036.

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Wisconsin & Newark (SW corner)
Conn & Newark (NW corner)
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Conn & Que (SW corner)
Kramer Books
Dupont South Metro

DOWNTOWN
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19th & M (SW corner)
Conn & M (SE corner)
Conn & L (SW corner)
17th & K (NE corner)

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1. Type the ad (with a good carbon ribbon) or use a black pentel pen. Copy may be no wider than 2 1/2" and no longer than 3". Single-space. Typing the ad vertically on a 3x5 file card is a good way to do this.

2. You may prepare your own camera-ready ad 3x3 or smaller.

We occasionally have space to run larger ads but you should always submit a smaller ad with it to make sure your message gets in.

Send to DC Gazette, 1739 Conn. Ave. NW DC 20009

If you want us to type your copy the price is \$1 for the first 20 words and 5¢ a word thereafter.



In the last issue we discussed the Sumner School, a fine old building that is important to the history of DC but which is in danger of being torn down. At the time we didn't have a decent photo of Sumner but now we do so here it is. (Photo by Leonard Cohen. (C) 1978)

ing of the Orange line. We now have about one-fifth the rail transit mileage we had a couple of decades ago before streetcar service was ended.

Politics of prayer

COUNCILMEMBER JERRY MOORE has introduced a resolution calling for prayer at the beginning of city council meetings. We asked one of Jerry's colleagues what he thought about the proposal and he said, "No." Asked why, he explained, "Most people think I'm political but there's only one thing I'm political about and that's religion."

Fletcher's art

ARTHUR FLETCHER'S recent campaign for mayor was noteworthy because it injected a new, and hopefully transitory, element into local Republican politics. Apparently even Fletcher decided that having been a Republican sub-cabinet official was not enough to elect him mayor and so he switched his tactics. Instead of trying to convince people he tried to scare them, using techniques that, if nothing else, reminded us why it wasn't so bad to have a Democrat in the White House. Barry, said Fletcher, was a prodigal son, the "white community's candidate" and should reveal what Secret Service, CIA, FBI and congressional files said about him — stuff that seemed straight out of a CREEP style book. Fletcher, without substantiation, said in an interview with national columnist Nick Timmesch, that Barry "used to holler 'Burn, baby, burn,'" and then capped off his innuendo and smear with the classic San Clemente touch, announcing that "integrity and character are now an issue."

Barry took it all in good humor but it was a performance that hasn't been seen in local GOP circles since the halcyon days of Carl Shipley. In contrast with some of their national leaders, local Republicans — like Jerry Moore, Jack Nevius, Paul Hayes and the late, beloved Henry Robinson — have run decent if not always effective campaigns. Fletcher's effort showed the heavy hand of the sort of GOP flack who thinks you can frighten people into voting your way. Some Republicans get nasty when they think.

Given that Fletcher had never done anything for the city except to help on minority employment problems as a Labor Department official, his approach was, to put it kindly, presumptuous. In the end his campaign sounded like nothing so much as the sort of calls Ken Beatrice gets on Monday complaining about what Joe Theismann did on Sunday.

And don't tailgate

WE SUPPOSE it's just because they don't want you to worry, but we haven't read much in the biggies about the tens of thousands of radioactive shipments passing through the local region. The Department of Energy's estimate is 250,000 shipments annually, including atomic wastes, uranium fuel and nuclear medicines.

According to the Potomac Alliance's Fred Millar, "most dangerous among the shipments are the nuclear weapons, which shipments are secret, and the 41 shipments of foreign spent fuel from Europe which arrive at Portsmouth harbor."

The Potomac Alliance recommends that "local citizens seek ordinances to require advance notification of atomic shipments, local voice in routing the shipments, more adequate testing of the containers, and emergency drills for possible atomic transport accidents."

FANS OF THE FORTY-YEAR-OLD HIPPIE, which used to run in the Gazette, will be happy to know that Rip Off Press, PO Box 14158, San Francisco, CA 94114, has just published an anthology of FYOH cartoons and will send you one for \$1.30. We hope the 60's burn-out will return to these pages some day but for the moment he's not being syndicated.

GODWRESTLING: A new book by Arthur Was-kow records contemporary interpretations of Biblical texts from his own experiences and those of Fabengen, a group dedicated to creating modern values out of authentic Jewish tradition. The book is published by Schocken and sells for \$9.95.

SUPPORT HATCH ACT REFORM

Join Marion Barry, Americans for Democratic Action, and the D.C. Democratic State Committee. The Hatch Act Reform Committee is supporting Barry, the ADA and D.C. Democrats in a lawsuit in the U.S. Court of Appeals to open up political participation and liberalize the Hatch Act. Send your contributions to: Hatch Act Reform Committee, Suite 1010, 1712 Eye Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. 338-5560.

On the Hill

THE CAPITOL HILL ARTS WORKSHOP has won BZA approval for its plans to convert the old French School into an arts training facility. It also received a federal historic preservation grant. The BZA rejected opposition by the Capitol Hill Restoration Society, long dominant in Hill zoning matters, and accepted the unanimous support of the Near SE Neighborhood Commission. . . .THE CAPITOL HILL RESTORATION Society has been awarded an \$85,000 grant to assist with the acquisition of a residence at 1002 Penna. Ave SE for use as its headquarters. The grant, from the Department of Interior, requires matching fund-raising. . . .THE CAPITOL EAST COMMUNITY CRIME COUNCIL warns that rapes in the area are continuing. The crime council can help organize blocks and provide other information (544-2300). . . .THE STANTON PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSN. and the Parish of St. James are planning a Renaissance Christmas celebration on Dec.17 (Maureen Nolan at 547-1078 evenings). . . .STUDIES GOING AHEAD FOR intercity bus terminal at the National Visitors Center. Some of the designs, says the ResSoc, would adversely affect the surrounding neighborhood. . . .BENEFIT FOR the Capitol Hill Restoration Society, Jan 19th at the Folger. The play is "Merry Wives of Windsor." Tickets are \$15 from Kay Elsasser, CHRS Folger Benefit Chairperson, 319 C NE, DC 20002. . . .THE BZA has approved letting the grocery store at 4th & East Capital open a deli. The neighborhood commission had opposed the application saying that it would add litter and bring in outside traffic.

Up Sixteenth Street

SOME RESIDENTS OF NORTH PORTAL Estates are complaining about the Park Service's 'meadow' on East Beach Drive. Retired Arm Colonel Harry T. Jones is leading the fight to end the NPS's research project, which has let a large area of formerly mowed grass turn wild. Jones calls it "A public nuisance that must be ended," pointing to hayfever, litter, dead limbs and general aesthetic anarchy. Says a Park Service official, "The flowers we hoped would be blooming by now are not. . . . Frankly the meadows are not as beautiful yet as they will be." . . . YOU CAN JOIN NEIGHBORS INC. by sending \$7.50 for an individual or \$15 for a family to Neighbors at 7705 Georgia Ave. NW DC 20012. . . . THE ZONING COMMISSION will hold public hearings regarding map changes in the Plan Takoma area on Jan 22 & 25. Times and places will be announced but at least one hearing will be in the neighborhood. A copy of the plan can be found at the Neighbors Inc. office. . . . YOU CAN ALSO GET THE NAMES of repair outfits in the area from NI, ones that have been recommended by local residents. . . . AS ELSEWHERE people up 16th Street need stop lights and stop signs but face a two to three year waiting period. . . .THE PAUL NEIGHBORHOOD School Council has gotten \$5000 from the Mott Foundation to run a variety of community projects including a plant show and workshop, family bowling tournament, mother-daughter bake sale, beauty workshop and trip to Atlantic City. SNAP says "These projects call for intensive community participation. If the community does not respond, we lose the money." For info call 576-6193.

IF YOU LIVE IN TAKOMA, in a house that was built in 1926 or earlier, Terry Dammann (722-0127) or Keith Kinsolving (829-0689) would like to hear about it: interesting information, owner's plans, people who lived there in the early days. They are trying to compile a report on the historical significance of the neighborhood preparatory to putting the community on the list of the National Register.

Around the Circle

MORE THAN 1000 APARTMENT units have been cleared for condo conversion in recent months and another 600 are in the hopper awaiting approval. . . .THE DUPONT CIRCLE Neighborhood Commission has a housing committee. If you need help, call them at 332-1088. . . . THE ZONING COMMISSION considers this month the application of Safeway to expand its operations at 17th & Corcoran NW. The neighborhood commission wants a number of assurances from Safeway including adequate service, increased number of check registers, no window advertising etc. The NC would also like housing to be constructed above the addition. . . .PLANS ARE BEING MADE for a community advisory committee for the soon to open Perpetual at 18th & Columbia. An agreement between Perpetual and the community called for creation of such a committee. . . .SCHOOL WITHOUT WALLS plans to move into the Grant School in the West End. . . .CHARLIE CASSEL, who ran a low-keyed statehood campaign for city council chair got 17% of the vote in Mt. Pleasant's precinct 40. . . . A NEW COMMUNITY LAW FIRM, aided

by a number of paralegal assistants, has opened at 1801 Columbia Rd. Services are geared to low and moderate income people with an emphasis on immigration law. You can get information on the firm started by attorney David Goren by dropping by or calling 483-1801.

A TIP OF THE HAT to Dupont Circle commissioner Susan Meehan for coming up with a new weapon in the anti-development fight. At a rally in behalf of Ellen's Irish Pub, threatened with destruction by the American Psychiatric Association, Susan cast a Gaelic curse on the APA. The city, for its part, has cast a 180-day demolition delay on the plans of the association. . . .ONE sign that the area is being depopulated: although citywide crime is rising, it dropped eight percent in the Third District which includes Dupont Circle-Adams Morgan.

JOHN SCHULTER of the Intowner says that the Hot Shoppe Cafeteria in the Universal Building is up for sale. . . .BARNEY HOUSE is open again after renovations. . . .THEY HIT THE HIGHS at 18th & Florida once too often. Won't renew its lease. . . .THE COLUMBIA HEIGHTS COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP PROJECT is still fighting the evictions at 2542 13th NW. The CHCOP wants to take over the building at no profit but the owners have refused. (Info: 265-1906).

West of the Park

THE DRAFT PLAN FOR CLEVELAND PARK, prepared by Citizens for City Living, has been published by CCL. This extensive document, which is based on a neighborhood survey and numerous planning workshops, is not only a first for the community, but, along with the plan for Dupont Circle, is a model of what neighborhoods can do for themselves in the planning area. CCL is seeking comments, which should be sent to Kay McGrath, 3312 Rowland Pl NW, DC 20008.

THE LONG-DELAYED WILSON POOL was to be dedicated this month. The RecDep is looking for ideas on community use of the pool during non-school hours. . . .ST. JOHN'S GREENS SALE in Georgetown once again on Dec. 16. All day at the corner of Potomac & O. . . .JOHN EATON will once again be selling Christmas trees. . . .SLIMNASTICS classes start at Hardy Recreation Center in January. Monday and Thursday evenings. Info: Mrs. Dee Robbins at 282-2190.

ABOUT 150 PEOPLE SHOWED UP recently for a meeting on the traffic problems along Reno Road-34th Street-(congestion, safety, pollution, etc.). The city has long considered this residential street a major commuter arterial and has shown little sign of planning to change its attitude. But now, Polly Shackleton reports, "Consideration is being given to putting up signs designating Reno Road as a non-through route during non-commuting hours and weekends. Traffic would be rerouted to Wisconsin and Connecticut Avenues. Further consideration also is being given to lengthening the red times on traffic signals. The Department's immediate plans are to ban through trucks and busses at all times and eliminate late hour flashing lights. When Metro to Maryland is completed, the Department proposes to declassify Reno, get through traffic off and restore the character of the area to one which is truly residential." . . . THE BATTLE TO SAVE McLEAN GARDENS continues with tenants still interested in purchasing the project. The residents association has come up with a scheme (that has gotten the nod from the local ANC) which would involve developing some of the empty portions of the property at low to medium density, which could bring in enough money to save the rest of the project. At press-time the whole deal was very much up in the air with competing would-be purchaser Dwight Mize indicating that he would fight the tenant take-over. Meanwhile, Mize is negotiating to purchase the Tower Apartments at 4201 Cathedral Avenue for \$41 million. More condo conversions in store. The irony here is that some former residents of McLean Gardens moved to the Towers because of poor prospects for saving the Gardens.

TENLEYTOWNERS read more. Or at least borrow more. The Tenley-Friendship library ranks third in the city in total circulation according to latest figures. . . .WHITE ELEPHANT SALE for residents of the Washington Home, 3720 Upton, on Dec 7 from 10 to 3. . . .FINAL APPROVAL FOR THE PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT at the Archbold Estate comes up before the Zoning Commission on Dec. 18 1 pm. The plan is for a French embassy chancery and associated buildings.

MARET SCHOOL WANTS TO build an art room and auditorium on its campus. The BZA hears about it on Dec 13, 9 am. . . .THE CITY IS PLANNING a waterline from the Dalecarlia Reservoir to the center of town. Three of the five proposed routes would pass through the Palisades. The Palisades Citizens Assn. is looking into the plans and how they might affect the neighborhood.

Proposition Fourteen

George Washington once wrote Lafayette, "Democratic states must always feel before they can see. It is this that makes their governments slow. But the people will be right at last."

These are all symptoms of distress and, if left unattended, the quack politicians will move in and we'll all be the worse for it.

Proposition 13 was an expression of this struggle, but not an especially productive one because it only cut public money without redistributing public power. The spirit of the anti-spending initiatives, however, could be turned to productive use if the public discon-

The Media Revue

As it turns out, the nation's mood was a bit more erratic than Clymer had led us to believe. It elected Daniel Flood and defeated Edward Brooke, gave Charlie Diggs an 80% margin and threw Joshua Eilberg out on his ear. But after such a long strike, one has to expect a few start-up problems.

RAIL SPLITTING produced one outstanding president, but golf has yet to produce even one good congressman — Will Rogers.

THERE WAS, HOWEVER, one element of consistency about the election. It seems that there was a lot of disappointment in the election night coverage. Small wonder what with Walter Cronkite losing South Dakota, another commentator describing a candidate as being "against women" (I think he meant women having abortions), and David Brinkley talking like he needed a new set of AA batteries slipped into his head. Election night coverage used to be at least as much fun as a title fight, but a combination of developments seem to have conspired to take all the joy out of it.

We had, of course, the omnipresent projections, which were being made last month with as few as 43 votes having been counted. The long hours of waiting for the outlying precincts had disappeared — in fact, the outlying precincts seem to have disappeared as well; they were never mentioned.

Before computers, the glorious complexity of American politics was unveiled during the long count. Reporters who knew where the Tishbottom strongholds were in downstate Illinois were called in to explain that we shouldn't be too concerned about Tishbottom's poor showing at this early hour. We stayed glued waiting for the Tishbottom downstate votes to gallop in and save their man at the last moment.

This hardly ever happens any more. We're lucky if the networks even know who Tishbottom is. One commentator last month actually had a candidate's brother leading in a senatorial race because he got the names mixed up.

The problem with computers is not that they are not smart but that they sometimes can make us dumber. Further they do precisely what my high school math teacher always insisted that we not do: they give us the answer without saying how we got there. This is efficient but extraordinarily dull.

The boredom intensifies when we are given little reason to give a damn about the final results anyway. The Senate and the statehouses attract candidates these days that inspire all the interest of a hot race for the senior vice presidency of AT&T. And if there were any sizable number of exceptions this year, the networks didn't bother to tell us. All evening long we were bombarded by names without character, personality or ideology. A six hour analysis of voting trends in local sanitation districts could have been almost as enthralling.

There was, apparently, one further problem, which was pointed out in the Washington Star's Ear. It seems that the networks bought the services of something called the News Election Service. This outfit was supposed to provide vote counts better than ever before, but, unfortunately, its computers broke down at the critical point. What appeared to be mindless babble on the part of our national commentators was merely a game attempt to revive the ancient broadcast art of filling airtime.

It's an excuse but not a good enough one. After all, the enjoyment of election night is not just knowing first what happened, but why and how. The networks seem to have forgotten how to tell us.

HAVING BEEN FAILED by television, I turned against my better judgement to the next day's cud-chewing in the print media. This, naturally, was a pretty worthless enterprise except for a choice piece by Jack Germond and Jules Witcover who described the election as a "slow collapse toward the center." They went on to say, "the voters showed themselves to be both politically and personally conservative, rejecting extreme and excess with a remarkable sense of discrimination."

This is a classic distillation of the media's attitude towards democracy. The success of government is judged by how little happens and, in this case, democracy showed its mettle.

OCCASIONALLY THE PRESS does have to make a choice, as when it endorses political candidates. One is encouraged to imagine the entire editorial staff dropping down to the marketplace of ideas and squeezing all the vegetables before making a choice. But it may not always work that way, and apparently didn't when the Washington Star chose its candidate for mayor of DC. According to the Washingtonian magazine, "After meeting with the candidates, the editorial staff decided that [ultimate winner Marion] Barry wasn't ready for the job; besides, argued many staff members, the Star shouldn't support Barry because the Post was supporting him."

FORTUNATELY, SUCH corporate considerations do not intrude on editorial comment about the Pope, of which we have had a sufficiency of late, moving briskly from a "smiling" pontiff to one skilled in battle against godless communism. For as aged a group as is the college of cardinals, one must be impressed by its ability to meet media requirements. A Catholic Daniel in the communist lion's den is a more than adequate replacement for photogeneity. After the rather stolid reign of Paul, Rome has hit the mark twice in quick succession.

Lest I seem unduly cynical about such matters, I refer you to Marjorie Hyer, Washington Post religion editor, who in speaking to the Fosdick Preaching Convocation described the reign of the first John Paul as literally a media event. Said Hyer:

"He was not Pope long enough to accomplish any real work, except to reveal a new relationship to the common people and to point to a new direction of simplicity. The media gave him, his winning smile and his loving attitude tremendous exposure. So when he died, after a mere 34 days, tens of millions of us had come to know him so well that we felt as though we had lost a member of the family."

Of course, the Pope has always been somewhat of a mediaperson, one of the earliest, in fact. What is extraordinary is that, with the exception of Billy Graham, he's the only theologian the media consistently cares about. He is, Episcopalians, Buddhists, Christian Scientists and running water Baptists notwithstanding, the preeminent theological symbol of the press. Given that the press tends to be controlled by slovenly Protestants, Jews, atheists and agnostics, this should give His Holiness some pause, but there is — especially these days — a solid media reason for elevating him beyond the confines of his church to status of Father of Us All. The problem the press faces is a dearth of morally admirable personalities. In the entertainment world, Anita Bryant is a poor substitute for Helen Hayes. In sports we are left to choose between Billy Martin and Reggie Jackson. And in politics the situation has become so dismal that one would not be surprised to find that Tongsun Park has been secretly funding Common Cause.

The Pope appeals to the press, and to many non-Catholics, because he's one of the few people we read or hear about who is probably morally superior to ourselves. We can be reasonably certain that he will not O.D. on drugs, slap a reporter in a bar or sell his autobiography under questionable terms.

Regardless of our religious affiliation, we should all pray for him. If he fails us it's back to Reader's Digest pantheocratic pablum for us. Specifically, our prayers should be directed towards the hope the the Pope remains largely locked in the Vatican and that we find out not too much about him or he about us; that he never agrees to be interviewed by Sally Quinn or Barbara Walters and never appears on Saturday Night Live, and that his cardinals, having discovered the glories of mass media appeal, do not forsake stuffy old theological values in order to prepare themselves to become the smiling pope of the future.

I AM TERRIBLY concerned about the Ethiopian man-eating monkeys. I have heard several references to them on the air but can't find printed verification. As I gather it, several Ethiopians have been consumed by rampaging monkeys, who have lost their traditional food sources. The implication of this should be startling to everyone, from your average Ethiopian to the Pope. I hope this isn't one of these stories that sneaks up on us unprepared.

ANOTHER REMARKABLE but ignored story comes to us from the pen of Betty Beale, the Washington social columnist, who recently described the cancer treatment of Walter Hodges, late president of a development firm. After a hassle with the FDA, Dr. John Stehlin of Houston was allowed to use a new drug called thymadine on Hodges. Hodges died but when they opened him up they found his death was due to an atrophied liver. The cancerous tumor was gone. Said the man who performed the autopsy, "This man never had a cancerous tumor." Researchers at the National Cancer Institute now have permission to use the drug on people on an experimental basis. Stehlin describes thymadine as a "naturally occurring substance in the body and one of the building blocks in DNA in

the human cell." The story was on the second page of the third section of the Star.

AS A LONG-TIME ADMIRER of the journalistic chutzpa of Paul Harvey, I felt the icons crashing around me as I read William Brashler's hatchet job in the November 7 Esquire. There's lots of stuff about credit-where-credit-is-due, low staff salaries and high living, presumptuous privacy etc., but the most fascinating revelation concerned Harvey's conversion to the anti-war movement. I have always credited Harvey's change of heart about Vietnam as an event at least as important as any in the peace movement. Consider that Harvey is heard on 774 radio stations, is read in 300 newspapers and gets 50,000 letters a year.

Harvey had been, in Brashler's words, "... a hawk's hawk. He wanted to drop an atomic bomb on North Vietnam and bomb Haiphong Harbor with everything we could drop on it. He wanted to win the war like we'd won all the others we'd ever fought."

Then something happened. Harvey began to talk of "parking it or driving it." And at the end of the 60's ... he started out his broadcast by saying "Mr. President, I love you, but you're wrong."

Harvey went on to preach against the war (he received 25,000 letters the first week) and as he explains it now:

I came to realize that the best we'd been able to leave them on the other side of the world in Korea, despite the expenditure of all those lives and the continuing occupation of what was then about fifty-five thousand men and the awful extravagance in gold, the best we'd been able to leave them over there was a military dictatorship.

But Brashler maintains there was something else.

Harvey's son was reaching draft age and his wife, *the dominant influence on her son's life, had no inclination in hell to see her son get anywhere near live ammunition.*

Reports vary about how Paul Jr. ... felt in the late 1960s about being drafted. But in the end, with his mother's encouragement, he became a conscientious objector.

The whole thing presented an awful conundrum for Dad: on the one hand, he was for the bomb droppers and the ass-kicking infantry; on the other, he was the parent of one potential bombardier and infantryman. His image, in the face of it all, could crack like an egg if his son refused to go.

So Paul Sr. handled professionally what he couldn't manage personally. He made his traumatic about-face, went public, and told Mr. Nixon he loved him. ... but didn't mention his son's decision on the air.

And now you know the rest of the story. ... Good day!

JUST AS A NEWSWEEK reporter sat down to interview ABC White House correspondent Sam Donaldson about his adventures covering the [Camp David] summit, a Swedish television crew glided up to film the exchange. Within seconds, an Israeli TV unit began filming the Swedes filming the Newsweek reporter interviewing ABC's Donaldson. Then two Egyptian journalists sidled over and began taking notes on how the Israelis were filming the Swedes filming

I'm just reporting what the Columbia Journalism Review said Time Magazine reported about two Egyptian journalists covering an Israeli TV unit which was filming. ... Oh, forget it.

—WALDROP FENSTER

PEACE CALENDAR: The Washington Peace Center is selling copies of the 1979 War Resisters Peace Calendar for \$3.50 plus 50¢ postage. The theme of this year's calendar is prisons. Write Washington Peace Center 2020 Fla. Ave NW, DC 20009

NEW WOMEN'S PUBLICATION: New Women's Times has begun publication. The first issue features articles by Erica Jong, Gloria Steinem, Phyllis Chesler, Grace Paley, Marge Piercy and Shere Hite. Write NWT, 1357 Monroe Ave, Rochester, NY 14618.

BOOK ON RAPE: Janet Bode has written a book called "Fighting Back: How to Cope with the Medical, Emotional and Legal Consequences of Rape," which is being published by McMillan. Bode says interviews with a number of psychiatrists and social workers have found that some rapists are mentally ill, but most are not.

POTOMAC RIVER: Bailus Walker, director of the city's environmental health administration, says "there are areas in the Potomac that can be made swimmable with a little more work." The Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin has recommended that the city reevaluate its swimming ban.

APARTMENT HEAT: The law says 68 degrees until 11pm, then 65 degrees until 630 am. If you're not getting it, call 724-4414.

ANOTHER PLACE: Working quietly at the Montana Terrace housing development in Northeast, Another Place has helped nearly 150 women move towards economic independence. Some have learned new skills, others have been assisted in applying to UDC, a couple have set up their own business and others have been aided in doing their present jobs better. The initial grant for the program came from HEW's Commission on Post-Secondary Education but these funds have run out and Another Place is looking for new sources to continue its work. (Shirley Munford, project director, 773-1373).

HOUSING LAW FOR NON-LAWYERS: The National Public Law Training Center recently ran a course on housing law for non-lawyers and they say they are planning to repeat it. (Info: Patricia Powers or Carol Berman at 872-0661)

EXTENDING RESIDENTIAL PARKING HOURS: Councilmember William Spaulding has proposed that the hours of residential parking limitations be extended from 630 pm to 9 pm. (Bill 2-400).

PRE-ENLISTMENT COUNSELING PROGRAM: The Washington Peace Center has started a pre-enlistment counseling program to provide information on the pitfalls of military enlistment and information on alternatives. The center is seeking volunteers and referrals. (234-2000).

RHODES TAVERN: The city administration is seeking \$7.2 million in federal funds to save the Rhodes Tavern and other historic buildings in the path of yet another Oliver Carr development. Mayor-elect Barry has announced support for saving the tavern.

DC LUNG ASSOCIATION: The DCLA has a new executive director, Theresa Paoletti, who was formerly director of an organization of staff workers of lung associations around the country. The DCLA has played a major role in local anti-pollution and anti-smoking efforts. (785-2444)

EMERGENCY SHELTER: With the city's callous destruction of 1361 Fairmont St. — planned by the Community for Creative Non-Violence as an emergency shelter for the evicted and homeless, the outlook for people kicked out during the winter months becomes grimmer. Last year in DC there were 2300 evictions involving more than 10,000 people. CCNV has put in more than 7000 volunteer hours, used \$14,000 in materials and \$20,000 in donated professional services. The Fairmont Street building would have equalled the capacity of the city's two official shelters, which provided space for 150 families at a cost of \$700,000. Last year, CCNV asked 1100 area churches for help in providing night shelter. Only two, St. Stephens and Luther Place Memorial, responded. This year CCNV will renew their request. Also, at press time, CCNV was planning to take over the Visitors Center as an emergency shelter. Meanwhile, the organization, one of the few trying to do something to help the homeless, needs funds. (CCNV, 1345 Euclid St. NW, DC 20009. 667-6407.)

WOMEN OFFICE WORKERS: 60 Words Per Minute, an organization for women of office workers, holds its first public hearing recently. Among the points made were that for every dollar a man earns in DC, women workers earn 70 cents. About 44% of the women workers in DC work in offices.

PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE PLAN: Joseph Danzansky has taken over as chair, replacing Elwood Quesada. . . . THE PADC is refusing to open its meetings to the public. . . . Quadrangle Corp. (sibling of the city's allegedly independent consultant on the Astroduct) and Marriott get the block between 13th & 14th, E & F. A Boston firm gets one nearby. . . . Does anyone know what those pylons are good for?

CITY PENSIONS: The future of the city's pension programs is in limbo following President Carter's veto of a measure that would provide \$1.6 billion to help bail out the unfunded pension commitments. The president's veto was another example of the fiscal curse of DC: the feds get us into programs we can't afford and then leave us holding the bag.

PAY TV: You could have seen 'Silver Streak,' 'Julia,' 'Semi-Tough,' and lots of other films right in your own home — without commercials — in November if you had been a subscriber to Channel 3, Marquee Television Network's pay TV channel. Installation costs about \$245 (including deposit) and the monthly charge is about \$15. Info: 770-5983.

APPLIANCE FIRMS RATED: Washington Consumer's Checkbook, that handy magazine about local consumer services, is out with an issue on TV, stereo and major appliance firms. Says CC, at some firms your chance of getting your set fixed right is only about 45%. At others it's 95%. For one common TV repair job, prices ranged from \$52 to \$154. And some of the best shops were among the cheapest. You can get CC at newsstands or bookstores or send \$5.25 to Checkbook, Suite 406, 1518 K NW, DC 20005.

'FLAMING LIBERAL' T-SHIRTS: The local chapter of ADA is selling T-shirts, scarves and note cards inscribed with the phrase, 'flaming liberal' in either English, Arabic, Spanish or Italian. T-shirts are \$6, scarves are \$10 and ten note cards with envelopes are \$7. Add \$1 for mailing and order from ADA Gifts, 1411 K NW (850), DC 20005.

PROPERTY TAX COMMITTEE: A group calling itself the Committee of 110,000

(for the 110,000 property owners in DC) has been formed to work on revisions of the city's tax laws. Info: Vernon Gras, 546-1139).

CULTURE VOLUNTEERS: The Volunteer Clearinghouse is looking for volunteers to work in local theatres, museums and art centers. They have a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to carry out the project. Opportunities include work in archivism, bilingual work, electrical, plumbing and carpentry work, docents, etc. Info: 333-0455.

METRO NUMBERS: To get Metro information call 637-2437. For information about senior citizen identification cards, call 637-1179. For information about handicapped identification cards, call 637-1245. To have a Metrobus timetable mailed to you, call 637-1261.

HANDICAPPED HANDBOOK: A handbook for parents and guardians of handicapped children in the District of Columbia has been prepared by the city government. You can get a copy by calling Doris Woodson at the Division of Special Education, DC Public Schools, 724-4018.

KAHN'S KAHNT: The way was cleared recently for the destruction of Kahn's Department store as part of the Pennsylvania Avenue project. Don't Tear It Down and the Joint Committee on Landmarks had recommended a demolition delay.

WOMEN APPRENTICESHIPS: The DC Commission for Women is working on encouraging women to apply for apprenticeships in the construction trades. Under a new program, the commission has managed in one year to double the number of women applying for electrical apprenticeships, for example. The commission has a fact sheet available for interested women which describes various apprenticeship programs available. Write the commission at room 204 of the District Building or call 724-5581.

EMERGENCY EYE AID: The Georgetown Medical Center has a round-the-clock emergency service for persons with eye injuries. Among other things, it has established a hotline for emergencies which can be called at any time: 625-EYES.

PRESERVATION LAWS IN CONGRESS: Rep. Fraser has introduced a number of bills concerning local preservation. The bills would preserve and restore the Rhodes Tavern (HR 1378), restore the former Masonic Hall (HR 1441) and support the establishment of a local history museum (H Res 1395). . . . The House has approved a Senate resolution to initiate studies for restoration of the Pension Building to house a Museum of the Building Arts.

WILSON HOUSE EXHIBIT: The Woodrow Wilson House has opened an exhibit called 'But this is Progress?' which juxtaposes photographs of buildings demolished and street scenes altered since 1950 with their present-day sites. The exhibit is the latest in a series of Washingtoniana shows at the house and will continue until April 15. The Wilson House is located at 2430 S NW and is open from 10 to 2 on weekdays and noon to 4 on weekends. Admission \$1.50 for adults; 50¢ for students and senior citizens.

SORT OF NEW PAPER IN TOWN: As part of its new zoning of editions, the Star has begun publishing a daily 'District Star' insert in its city papers. The thin supplement is heavy on soft news, contains a curious number of non-DC items and uses some ugly headline type. But it does give up-to-date information on upcoming meetings and hearings and welcomes back to town Chuck Stone as columnist. Stone, former editor of the Afro and erstwhile Gazette contributor, remains one of the most savvy people about what's happening in this town. . . . We fear mightily for the Star, however. Its circulation has dropped and the advertising seems disturbingly scarce.

CAR-BARN REZONING GETS NOD: For years the beautifully ugly car barn on East Capitol Street has lain fallow while various community groups have tried to come up with some workable proposal for it. Now the Zoning Commission has given tentative approval for a zoning change that would permit the 1896 structure to be used as a complex of townhouses, condos, offices and maybe some shops. The plan has spurred some controversy in the community and has yet to be approved by the Joint Committee on Landmarks.

HAMILTON ARMS SAVED FOR THE MOMENT: That peculiar Georgetown complex known as Hamilton Arms, outdoor murals and all, has gotten a new lease on life thanks to a decision by the Fine Arts Commission rejecting an application from its owners to demolish several of the structures on the property. Says FAC secretary Charles Atherton, "The Hamilton Arms complex should remain as intact as possible. It's unique. It has a place in Georgetown." Commission groupies should take note that we do not believe the FAC is always wrong.

THE AT-LARGE SEAT: David Clarke and John Ray are among those eying Marion Barry's soon to be vacant seat on the city council, along with Doug Moore, H.R. Crawford, Goldie Johnson and others too numerous to mention. This is going to be a helluva an interesting race, so tear off your old bumper stickers and get ready to go again.

GEORGETOWN COPS OUT: The city has sold its old Georgetown police station for \$757,000 to a developer who plans to use the building as townhouses and build some more on the adjoining lot. The price surprised city officials — who were expecting far less. One wonders whether the city is equally perceptive in pricing other things — say like street and alley closings, for which, at the moment, it gets nothing.

ADOPTIVE RECORDS BILL KILLED: After backing and filling the City Council has killed a proposal that would have allowed adult adoptees to find out who their natural parents were. Voting for the bill were Clarke, Mason, Shackleton, Wilson, Barry and Tucker. Voting against were Hardy, Winter, both Moores, Spaulding and Rolark.

PERSONNEL BILL TROUBLES: In signing the new city personnel bill, Walter Washington warned that the legislation would create dozens of new pay systems that could cause chaos for city budgeting and management. He asked the council to revise the legislation to deal with this problem.

FIGHT OVER WATER: Suburban jurisdictions are furious with the city's decision to increase its claim on the capacity of the Blue Plains water treatment facility. There will be law suits, charges and counter-charges, but the thing to keep in mind is that there simply isn't enough water to meet every local politician's desire for an "improved tax base" by massive new development.

GALLERY ROW TO MOVE: Two businessmen have proposed creating a gallery complex on 7th Street downtown. They want a 99-year lease with the Pennsylvania Avenue boys. P Street and Georgetown art dealers are interested although a few, like Jane Haslem and Henri have demurred. Says Henri: "The Philips and Henri will stay here in the neighborhood until hell freezes over." The question is, of course, what effect such a plan would have on Dupont Circle's existing art community and what might replace it.

SCHOOL NOTES: The school board wants to know why Mayor Washington hasn't done more about removing materials with high lead and asbestos content from the schools. . . Did Vince Reed have an offer in hand when he pressed the school board about its intentions towards him? . . . The issues in the teacher negotiations seem rather far removed from the concern of many parents, which is how you improve the quality of teaching. Longer hours won't do it. . . But then, parents aren't represented in the negotiations, which should be an issue but isn't. . . City Councilmembers, who continue to keep the squeeze on the school budget, like to cite the system's declining enrollment. The funny thing about that argument, points out Bob Boyd of DC Citizens for Better Public Education, is that the city's population is also declining — yet its total budget has risen at three times the rate of that of the school system. Says Boyd: "The declining clientele test never seems to get applied to any governmental service except public education."

GOVERNMENT PARKING: COG wants to do away with subsidized parking for government workers. So does Joel Joseph, who is currently representing a number of environmental groups in a lawsuit to eliminate it. Ruling expected shortly.

DEMOCRATS AT PLAY: The city's Democrats are talking about eliminating the possibility of non-Democrats holding committee chairs on the city council, ending the protection of minority party council seats and making it harder for people to be write-in candidates. Even Democrats ought to oppose this sort of political greed.

COALITION FOR CLEAN AIR FADES: Faced with increasing financial problems, the Coalition for Clean Air has ended its independent corporate status and has now been absorbed as the environmental health program of the DC Lung Association. CCA has been one of the true friends of the city over the past years and we'll miss them.

UPPER NORTHEAST DEVELOPMENT: One of the largest development proposals in the city was up before the Board of Zoning Adjustment last month. The plan calls for 541 condo-townhouses on 24 acres near Trinisty College.

STATE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION: There will be a hearing on Dec. 13 at 10 am and 530 pm in the council chamber on a proposal to establish a state development corporation in DC. An SDC is a private corporation with financial institutions as members to create a risk pool lender mechanism for small businesses. You can get on the witness list by calling Bessie Ross at 724-8085.

ENERGY CONSERVATION CODE: A new energy code is currently being considered by the council's committee on Housing and Urban Development. A copy of the draft proposal was printed in the November 17, DC Register.



—JOEL BECK

Questions/Parents Answers/Union

Q

Why a Parent Union?

A Because it's needed! We need strong united parents with the strength to influence positive change in our schools.

As we move from crisis to crisis, it seems that the last ones to be represented in the final solutions are the very people who are supposed to be served by our schools—the children, the parents, and the taxpayers.

Unions are organized to democratically represent the needs of its members. Parents Union's goals are to:

- Represent the interest of parents as a bargaining agent in all public school matters
- Protect the rights of children and parents
- Gain quality, humanizing education for all children in the District of Columbia Public Schools
- Serve as an independent, city-wide organization

Q

Who is the Parents Union?

A You are! If you are a parent of a public school child or an individual concerned about quality education for our future citizens, you are entitled to join. The more members we have in the ranks, the stronger our voice.

Q

How does Parents Union help children?

- By providing volunteer advocates to help guard children's rights in school disputes (such as discipline, academic problems and special placement)
- By referring parents to other helping agencies when necessary
- By monitoring all school board meetings
- By keeping close watch on city and federal laws that could affect your child

Q

How does Parents Union help parents?

- By offering immediate help through our PARENTS' HOTLINE: 563-0372

- By keeping parents informed of important issues through monthly newsletters, updates, and fact sheets
- Through the support of other concerned parents so that no member needs to feel alone in solving a school problem
- By forming committees that study and act upon serious issues, such as special education, contract negotiations, school budget, food services, transportation, etc.
- By holding training sessions and workshops that teach parents how to deal with the system and how to help other parents solve school related problems

Q

How does Parents Union work with school officials and teachers?

How can Parents Union work with schools officials and teachers?

We can gain the respect of many school officials. Parents Union representatives can meet monthly with the superintendent and this staff in a spirit of cooperation. Our members can serve on many citizen committee and can meet individually with school board members.

Parents Union can always fight attempts to eliminate programs that benefit children.

Q

How does Parents Union relate to home and school associations?

Most of Parents Union's Board and members are active in their children's Home and School Associations and frequently serve as officers. Home and School Associations are encouraged to join Parents Union.

In addition, Parents Union can provide special speakers and programs of interest at your next meeting.

Parents Union is completely independent of the school district. This independence allows us to tackle all issues.

Why you should join Parents Union!

Parents Union is an organization of PARENTS working to HELP other PARENTS.

You do everything you, as an individual, can do. But many times problems get too big to handle alone. That's why there's a Parents Union. Because often it takes the combined strength of many parents and concerned individuals, like yourself, to make a difference.

JOIN US—TODAY!!!

YES!

I WANT TO JOIN...

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

For each child attending school in the District of Columbia, please list name, school and grade.

Name	School	Grade

Check below if you would like to participate in any Parents Union committees and activities:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grievances | <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking | <input type="checkbox"/> Title 1 Program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Food Services |
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Flotsam & Jetsam

The Cuyahoga

SOMEWHERE IN 'LORD JIM' Conrad says that the difference between a hero and a coward is paper thin. Heroes and cowards are people who, for one brief instance, do something out of the ordinary.

There are other paper thin dichotomies as well. Like sometimes the difference between surviving and dying. For one brief instance someone does something out of the ordinary and you survive — or does something else and you do not.

On October 20, in the Chesapeake Bay near the mouth of the Potomac River, the Coast Guard Cutter Cuyahoga was rammed by a freighter coming down the bay and sunk with the loss of eleven lives. Over the past few weeks a board of inquiry has found many potential explanations of the accident to consider — poor training, poor communications, poor navigation, misinterpretation of radar, incorrect signals, lack of watertight integrity, antiquated equipment. Some or all may have played their part, but we might not have known of any of them were it not for a brief instance when the commanding officer of the Cuyahoga backed his engines down. According to one witness, if the Cuyahoga had maintained speed, it would have cleared the freighter. The difference: four seconds.

For most of us, failure requires the slow cultivation of error. The possibility of disaster striking with wanton speed hangs mostly in the closet of our minds. We peer at it only, say, when we are driving down a rain-glossed two-lane highway late at night and the other car rips around the curve. Or as we feel an unaccustomed clunk as the plane comes in for a landing.

We expect mortality to give us fair warning — like age or disease. There is something inherently unreasonable about having only four seconds in which to do the right thing. It's one of the reasons we fear crime — not just the danger and the loss, but the suddenness of it. Choices have to be made and there is no time in which to make them.

Yet there are some — the sailor, airline pilot, explosives experts among them, for whom the brief instances are always there. It divides them from the rest of us. They can not accumulate their mistakes at leisure, for, too often, error is not a matter of opinion but a fact.

It's why the sea both fascinates and frightens. In 'Mirror of the Sea,' Conrad says, "Of all the living creatures upon land and sea, it is ships alone that cannot be taken in by barren pretenses, that will not put up with bad art from their masters."

Countries and ships are among the few objects of value that take the feminine gender. Given men's dominance over the language, this choice reflects an affection and love that exceeds that accorded other material things — anthropomorphized matter, living creatures.

The Cuyahoga was a living creature. I knew her, for like most of those aboard at the time of the collision, I was once an officer candidate at the Coast Guard School at Yorktown, Va., and took my first training cruise aboard the Cuyahoga.

She was fifty-one years old when she was sunk. The age doesn't strike you until you think of police officers driving around in 1927 squad cars or a 1927 bus taking you to work.

That she was too old for what she was doing was a view that even the Coast Guard shared. I have a copy of the 'Coastguardsman Manual.' Here is what it says about the class of vessels to which the Cuyahoga belonged:

These 125 footers were built between 1927 and 1929, primarily as anti-smuggling vessels. . . . More than thirty of these craft were built. In 1939-42 they were given new engines which increased their speed to 13 1/2 knots.

The 125-footers worked all during World War II, with many of them performing valuable search, patrol, and rescue work, but by the end of the war they were commencing to show their age. No more than a dozen of them were in service by 1964; at least half a dozen of the well known old-timers were decommissioned in the past five years. The survivors are presently assigned to district patrol work where they are still frequently in the news for small boat rescue work. But their slow speed is a disadvantage, and they will eventually be replaced by larger, faster craft.

That was written fourteen years ago.

At the time, the Coast Guard had just embarked on a modernization program, building its first new, large (for it) ships in twenty years. I never saw one while I was on active duty. I sailed on a buoy tender that was nearly two decades old. The Coast Guard considered it one of its newer ships.

Unlike the other services, the Coast Guard did not have an effective lobby on Capitol Hill, and it didn't really seem to care that much. It lived by the Down East maxim of "make it do, use it up, do without," or as the saying went in the Guard, "In our obscurity lies our security."

In fact, part of the appeal of the Coast Guard was that you not only read about its history, you lived it. You trained on a cutter that had chased rum runners. You fueled pre-World I lightships and, with the exception of the smaller patrol boats, every ship you saw had been on active duty in World War II.

But there was another side. You heard stories of the Coast Guard cutter where you could bet in a pool on whether it would return from ocean station duty. And another where the crew slept in life jackets. "We send men out in ships," a warrant officer told me, "that we would never let pass inspection."

Up in Woods Hole, the search & rescue vessel was the General Greene, a sister ship of the Cuyahoga. The ship had once sailed half way to Bermuda because the captain didn't dare turn it in heavy seas. And now they wouldn't let her out of port when the wind hit 30 knots, so we became the heavy weather search & rescue vessel

for the area and I lost many meals over the side as the Coast Guard remained within its budgetary restraints.

It's too bad ships like the Cuyahoga and the General Greene were unseaworthy, aged, slow and hard to save if they got hit, for with their gently sloping sheer and compact superstructure they truly looked like Coast Guard cutters, dauntless and tough, maritime marshalls riding horseback on a watery desert. Maybe that's one reason they didn't give up the Cuyahoga sooner. It was a last link to a non-technological heritage when bravery mattered more than equipment and success came more out of the serendipity of idiosyncratic individuals working in concert than from the smooth coordination of data and materiel. If so, it was a hell of a price to pay for nostalgia.

THERE didn't used to be a choice. The motto of the old lifesaving service was, "You have to go out; you don't have to come back." And you did what you could with what you had; the latter often wasn't much.

Ida Lewis, keeper — like her father before her — of the lighthouse on Lime Rock in Newport RI, saved 23 persons from drowning using a pulling boat she hauled in and out of the water. Once she rescued three men whose boat had been swamped as they tried to save a sheep that was in the bay; then she rescued the sheep. Her activities brought President Grant and Vice President Colfax to the rock in 1869. Upon landing, the president got his feet wet and he remarked, "I have come to see Ida Lewis and to see her I'd get wet up to my armpits if necessary."

Ida Lewis made her last rescue when she was 64.

The Coast Guard Cutter Bear, built in 1874, spent 41 years on the Bering Sea Patrol. In the winter of 1897-98, she went to the aid of whaling ships frozen near Point Barrow, Alaska. After sailing as far as possible, a party from the Bear mushed across nearly 2000 miles of ice, driving a herd of 400 reindeer ahead of it for food. Reaching the stranded whalers in late March, the Bear's crew maintained order and staved off starvation until the cutter could reach them four months later when the ice broke up. Later she would carry Admiral Byrd to the South Pole and saw service in World War II, seven decades after she was built. Her end did not come until 1963 when, as a derelict under tow, she sank in the North Atlantic, almost 90-years old.

When prohibition came, the Coast Guard once again made do. Malcolm Willoughby describes an incident in his 'Rum War at Sea' in which one Ensign Duke

...called for the 'Greypoint' to heave to, but she plowed on defiantly. . . . CG-2327, poking her nose into every wave, raised showers of spray. . . . Ensign Duke plunged on until he was opposite the freighter's bow, where he fired two warning shots from his revolver to no avail. The ensign, soaking wet, stood up at the bow while the steersman drew close to the vessel; then he reached out, grabbed the freighter's rail, and swung on board.

Ensign Duke did not know how many men or weapons he would face, but he knew his own defenseless position with only a flashlight, and three bullets left in his revolver. From 'Greypoint's' deck, in a grand exhibition of bravado, he called to those in the small boat saying, "If I'm not out of that pilot house in two minutes you turn the machine gun on them." There was none.

In the light of his flashlight he groped his way to the deckhouse. There he was stopped by a burly seaman whom he cracked on the head with his revolver butt. He then went up the ladder to the pilot house swinging his flashlight on six men huddled in corners. Finding the master, Duke put his revolver to his ribs, asking why the ship reeked of alcohol. He ordered the master to reverse the engines and turn the vessel about, but the captain refused. The ensign then turned the ship about himself running her aground on Robbins Reef.

The ensign's cutter went for help while the officer kept 22 prisoners and the wanted ship under guard.

I don't know what finally happened to the Greypoint, but hundreds of other vessels seized by the Coast Guard were fitted out for its use. The only ones burned or otherwise destroyed were those too unseaworthy to remain afloat. You just didn't waste a good boat.

This recycling tradition was still alive in the Coast Guard (then under Treasury) as late as the early sixties. The commander of the Second Coast Guard District drove a Chrysler Imperial that had been liberated from Chicago gangsters by Treasury's alcohol and tax unit.

Today, what with new ships, computers, big budgets and big gadgets, it may all be different. But the Cuyahoga and its commanding officer dated from the old Guard when you went out on what you had and did the best with what you knew. It's not an exculpation for what happened on the Chesapeake Bay but perhaps a part of the frame. I heard the other day that the military has come up with a satellite navigational device that a soldier can carry in his backpack and find his position to within thirty feet. In the early sixties, I navigated using a World War II Loran set and was designated as boarding officer for a fisheries patrol when no one had told me how to tell a haddock from a cod. It's just the way it was and you didn't think much about it.

You learned by doing. Which has its merits. Only sometimes it takes too long.

NOT that Coast Guard OCS wasn't a good school. It was. I learned more there in thirteen weeks than I have ever learned in such a short period of time. But it was book learning, mostly. And after being assigned to a desk job for a while, I found myself designated operations officer and navigator of a buoy tender out of Bristol RI, desperately trying to recall what the book had said. My first day out I plotted a fix. You take bearings on three objects and if your bearings and lines on the chart are done right, the bearings meet in a precise point. If you're off, there's a triangle and you hope you're somewhere in the middle. Or better, you take another fix. I remembered what my navigation instructor had said: "If you take one fix and it puts you on one side of a rock; then you take another and it puts you on the other side of the rock, don't split the difference."

My first fix resulted in a huge triangle. My quartermaster stood beside me in silent disapproval. Not knowing what else to say, I took the words out of his mouth: "That's pretty good for a fucking reserve." He laughed in relief. I was educable. I understood that on a small ship rank must give way to knowledge.

Those who came to Coast Guard OCS included enlisted men and warrant officers working their way up. And there were draft mitigators, like myself. But you didn't come just for pragmatic reasons. At the school I was to get my first taste of the extraordinary bond that existed among those in the Coast Guard, a bond created not just by the size and nature of the service but by the sea. There were more than a few who were not unlike David Scott McDowell, a seaman apprentice lost in the Cuyahoga sinking. His father said of him, "Ever since he was tiny he loved the Guard. Nothing else would do for him. He had a boat at our local lake. We could never get him off of it."

The Coast Guard was like becoming a firefighter or a pilot, a place where you could maintain a continuum from childhood fantasy to adult reality.



AND it was small enough that when I was an ensign I could walk into Coast Guard headquarters in Washington to check on my requested transfer to a ship and have the senior officer behind the desk repeat my name and say, without looking at one file, "Oh yes, you want to go to sea, don't you?"

Names were important in the Guard. There were family names, like the Midgetts, who had almost squatter's rights in the Guard. When you moved from one unit to another, you only had to mention a few names to find a common link. I would not be surprised if the captain of the Cuyahoga had met all the members of the board of inquiry at some point in his career.

The captain, Donald Robinson, said it after the sinking: "I feel hurt and I feel pain. Some of those 11 boys killed were no older than my own children. It was like losing 11 sons. We were like a big family; that's the way to describe it."

I felt this when I was in the Guard and I felt it again reading about the Cuyahoga. The Coast Guard was a good life, so good in fact, that I, who had joined largely to avoid the draft, thought long and hard about making a career of it. Even when I decided not to, I stayed for three years with a reserve unit in Baltimore. Part of our job, typically, was to help rehabilitate a Navy vessel discarded by that service. The Coast Guard was going to use it for training.

I liked the sea, the idea that when you finished a day you knew you knew what you had done, the sense of purpose, and the eccentricity and individuality on which the Coast Guard seemed to thrive despite its military patina.

The patina was thin. The Coast Guard was known as the "hooligan Navy," and we didn't really object to it. If you did your job, you could get away with things what would have meant the brig in the other Navy. The best heavy weather helmsman on our ship, who not only was steady but never got sick, was a terror ashore, but the captain took it in stride and had him paint out another compartment for punishment went he went AWOL, rather than sending him to the Newport lock-up. The Coast Guard then had many lonely outposts with no officer around for months. Enlisted men were often in charge, warrant officers commanded vessels, and the whole hierarchal tradition of the military was muddled by the fact that, with a few exceptions, there was a real job for everyone.

Further, it would have been hard to be military if you had wanted to. Our ship carried a 3"-50 mounted aft, which would only fire a few points forward of the beam. Thus the only effective way we could have fired at someone would have been when we were running away from them. Since our flank speed was 15 knots, this option was not available.



I suppose it's a lot different now, what with boatnappings and the maritime drug trade, but the Coast Guard then carried out most of its law enforcement duties without ever using a gun. There was a principle laid down by Alexander Hamilton in his first orders to the Revenue Marine, the original name for the Coast Guard. It would be worth reading at the graduation of any metropolitan police academy class and to all government officials:

While I recommend in the strongest terms to the respective officers, activity, vigilance, and firmness, I feel no less solicitude that their deportment may be marked with prudence, moderation and good temper. Upon these last qualities, not less than the former, must depend the success, usefulness and consequently continuance of the establishment in which they are included. They cannot be insensible that there are some prepossessions against it, that the charge with which they are entrusted is a delicate one, and that it is easy by mis-management to produce serious and extensive clamour, disgust and alarm.

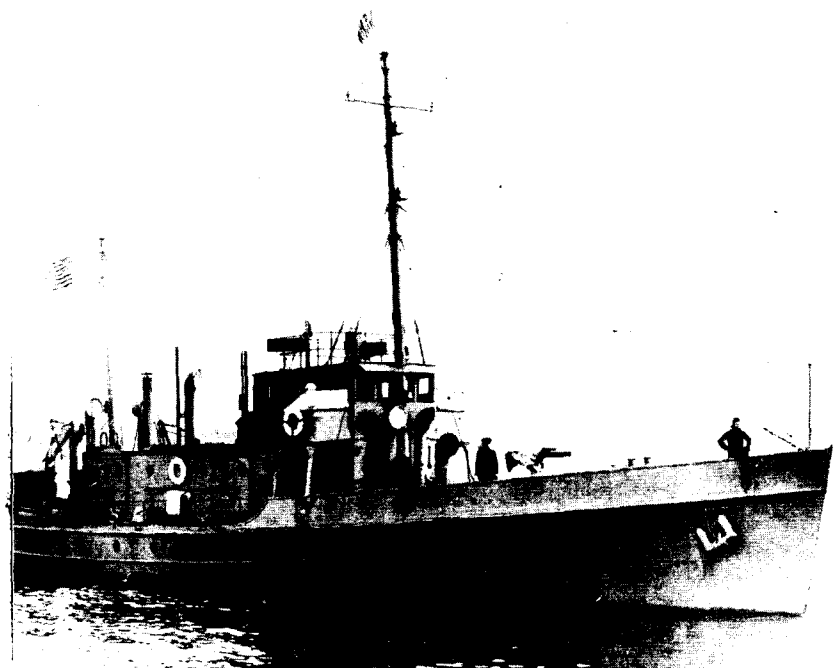
They will keep in mind that their countrymen are freemen, and, as such, are impatient of everything that bears the least mark of domineering spirit. They will, therefore, refrain, with the most guarded circumspection, from whatever has the semblance of haughtiness, rudeness or insult. If obstacles occur, they will remember that they are under the particular protection of the laws and that they can meet with nothing disagreeable in the execution of their duty which these will not severely reprehend. This reflection, and regard to the good of the service, will prevent at all times a spirit of irritation or resentment. They will endeavor to overcome difficulties, if any are experienced, by a cool and temperate perseverance in their duty — by address and moderation, rather than by vehemence and violence. The former style of conduct will recommend them to the particular approbation of the President of the United States, while the reverse of it — even a single instance of outrage or intemperate or improper treatment of any person with whom they have anything to do, in the course of their duty — will meet with his pointed displeasure, and will be attended with correspondent consequences.

Two centuries later, this remarkable guide to behavior by one in authority was still being published in the front of the Coastguardsman's Manual.



THERE was, of course, the bad as well in the Guard. Flashing your hash over the side in a gale, the cold of the steel decks stabbing through your boots, chicken-shit regulations and people to enforce them. And those moments when you realized you might be doing something very wrong. Those brief moments.

It could happen when you least expected it. I remember a beautiful morning when we took our normal hour-long stroll down Narragansett Bay to the ocean. I was officer of the deck and had propped myself upon the port wing of the bridge



The Tiger, a sister ship of the Cuyahoga, waiting to spring upon a rum-runner.

to enjoy the sun. I was feeling a little guilty taking federal money for a trip on the bay, but not really, and I wasn't thinking about where we were because the quartermaster always took fixes every three minutes and we went up and down this bay several times a week and besides I could eyeball it — and then I suddenly realized Rose Island was a lot closer than it was supposed to be. I rushed to the alidade, took some bearings and plotted them. We were not in danger but way off course.

I gave a course correction and no one noticed. Except me. It scared me; I realized how my eyes and my experience with that bay had fooled me. No matter this time, but next? I thought how I might explain to a board of inquiry running aground in Narragansett Bay on a sunny spring morning.

In fact, the Spar, a few years earlier, had run aground in Narragansett Bay, rounding a dangerously familiar island too close and ripping a huge gash in its hull. There were those on board who could tell you that you never know too much about where you are.



THERE was another brief moment. We were on a search and rescue mission, somewhere in the North Atlantic, and the wind and water were throwing their weight against the Spar with unrelenting ardor. The Spar had been built with ice-breaking capability — she had once, in company with three other vessels, made and broken her way through the legendary Northwest Passage across the roof of Canada. This ability in ice was achieved in part by a bottom configuration that provided little comfort in heavy weather: she cork-screwed viciously, taking 45 degree rolls for the hell of it, followed by a mean pitching and then another roll. On nights like this I would sleep in my bunk wedged between my laundry bag on one side and my lifejacket on the other. This way I would only pitch and roll with the ship, and not in addition to it.

I had come on watch and there was nothing outside but huge ungulating shadows hurling themselves against the ship. There was nothing inside except some morsels of bread I made myself to eat to fill the forced vacuum of my stomach. Four hours is a long time on such a night.

The Spar had direct drive; that is to say you could control the speed of the ship by moving a throttle on the bridge rather than telegraphing commands to the engine room. In a storm you have to watch your speed, achieve some sort of passable truce between your vessel and its environment. The ship seemed to be handling itself well and I was anxious to get where we were going. I nudged the throttle ahead. A minute or so later a rogue wave hit us smashing its tail against the bridge port-holes. The ship shuddered and stopped. A voice came through the tube from below: "What the fuck's going on up there; you just knocked two guys out of their bunks." I eased the throttle back.

No one was hurt, but that was just luck.



THE third time it wasn't my fault, but it didn't make it any better. We were coming up the bay after a day of tending buoys. The ferry that ran from Bristol to Prudence Island was coming down the channel — on the wrong side. I blew one blast on the horn, indicating that I wanted to pass like cars on a street, port to port. The ferry blew a cross-signal, she wanted to stick to our side of the channel. I turned to the captain, "Should we let her. . ." The captain was mad. "I'll take the conn," he said. "I stand relieved, sir," I said, and was. He blew a series of warning blasts and stuck to the right of the channel; the ferry kept coming at us. The captain blew one long blast, and, at the last possible moment, the ferry eased over. We passed a few feet apart with the two captains on their respective bridge wings hurling epithets at each other. Another brief moment survived.



NONE of this explains what happened on Chesapeake Bay, why this accident occurred on a clear night on a ship in command of a warrant officer with more than a quarter-century of service. Why the radar wasn't working right. Why warnings weren't acknowledged as well as sent. Why the Cuyahoga turned when she did. I do know that only a fool would say it couldn't have happened to them and that experience is not always a friend; it can sometimes lull and beguile you. I once asked an airline pilot why there were so few accidents at Washington's hyper-crowded National Airport. Everyone knows it's dangerous, he said, so they're more careful. Perhaps going up Chesapeake Bay was too simple.

The board of inquiry has its report to make, the proximate causes to find, the blame to assess, but the non-professional part of the incident will probably be left out — and that's the fact that for those in the Coast Guard and for those, like me, who were once, it was more than another accident. It was death in the family.

—SAM SMITH

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